

Teacher Attitudes Toward AI in Mass Communication Education: A Systematic Review

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Abstract:

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly transforming both educational practice and the professional landscape of mass communication, raising questions about how educators perceive its integration into teaching and learning. This systematic review examined whether teachers hold positive attitudes toward using AI in mass communication education. A systematic search involving 21 targeted keyword searches and one citation-graph search was conducted, supplemented by citation crawling from 50 seed papers. Automated relevance and quality filtering and deduplication reduced the retrieved literature to approximately 3,300 potentially eligible papers, from which the 100 highest-ranked studies were included in the final synthesis. Findings indicate that teachers' attitudes toward AI are generally positive but cautious and conditional. Educators particularly value AI for improving instructional efficiency, supporting lesson planning and content development, providing feedback, and preparing students for increasingly AI-mediated professional environments. In mass communication-related disciplines, AI is additionally perceived as having potential to simulate professional practices and enhance students' preparedness for changing media and communication industries. However, positive attitudes are tempered by concerns regarding academic integrity, student overreliance, misinformation and algorithmic bias, data privacy, professional displacement, and insufficient AI-related training. Perceived usefulness and ease of use emerge as prominent drivers of acceptance, whereas institutional readiness and professional development appear important for translating favorable perceptions into pedagogical adoption. Overall, the evidence suggests that teachers tend to view AI positively, but their acceptance is better characterized as cautious optimism rather than unconditional enthusiasm. Importantly, direct empirical evidence focusing specifically on mass communication educators remains limited, restricting the extent to which findings from broader educational contexts can be generalized to this field. Further discipline-specific empirical and longitudinal research is therefore needed to establish how mass communication educators' attitudes develop as AI becomes more deeply embedded in both education and professional media practice.

Key Word: Artificial Intelligence; Teacher Attitudes; Mass Communication Education; AI In Education; Communication Education; Systematic Review.

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I. Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly transforming both educational practice and the professional landscape of mass communication. The growing use of generative AI, automated content-production systems, audience analytics, and other AI-supported technologies has created new opportunities and challenges for journalism, advertising, public relations, and related media professions (Dong, 2024). This transformation has important implications for mass communication education, as teachers are expected not only to prepare students for AI-influenced professional environments but also to consider whether and how AI should be incorporated into their own teaching practices.

Teachers' attitudes represent an important consideration in this process. The introduction of a new technology into education depends partly on whether teachers perceive it as valuable and appropriate for teaching and learning. Existing research across educational contexts suggests that teachers recognize a range of potential benefits associated with AI. AI tools can support lesson planning, instructional content development, personalized learning, feedback, and assessment, potentially reducing teachers' workload while expanding opportunities for instructional innovation (Adiguzel et al., 2023; Baidoo-Anu & Owusu Ansah, 2023). Such perceived benefits may contribute to favorable attitudes toward the educational use of AI.

However, teachers' responses to AI are not uniformly positive. Alongside its perceived usefulness, educators have expressed concerns about academic integrity, inaccurate or fabricated information, algorithmic bias, student overreliance on AI, ethical use, and the possible erosion of human interaction in education

(Adiguzel et al., 2023; Agarwal et al., 2024; Baidoo-Anu & Owusu Ansah, 2023). Research drawing on technology-acceptance perspectives similarly suggests that attitudes toward AI may reflect a balance between its perceived usefulness and ease of use and educators' concerns regarding its pedagogical and ethical consequences (Krishna et al., 2026; Viernes & A. Palapuz, 2025). Thus, the increasing availability of AI does not necessarily imply that teachers view its integration into education positively.

This issue is particularly relevant to mass communication education. Unlike disciplines in which AI functions primarily as an instructional technology, mass communication educators encounter AI simultaneously as a teaching tool and as a technology reshaping the professions for which they prepare students. Teachers may therefore recognize the need for students to develop competence in using AI while remaining uncertain about its appropriate role in classroom teaching and learning. Nevertheless, much of the existing literature on teachers' attitudes toward AI has examined educators across broad educational settings, while evidence specifically concerning mass communication and related communication disciplines remains comparatively limited and dispersed (Dong, 2024). Business communication pedagogy, for example, has been described as being at an early stage in addressing the implications of AI for professional communication practice (Getchell et al., 2022).

Although individual studies provide useful evidence about educators' perceptions of AI, their findings may differ according to educational context, AI application, and the dimensions of attitude being investigated. Some studies emphasize enthusiasm regarding efficiency and pedagogical possibilities, whereas others highlight hesitation arising from ethical, professional, and educational concerns. Examining individual studies in isolation therefore makes it difficult to determine whether the existing body of evidence indicates an overall positive orientation toward AI among educators in mass communication education. A systematic synthesis is needed to consolidate these findings and establish the general direction of teachers' attitudes across the available empirical literature.

Accordingly, this systematic review synthesizes existing empirical evidence on teachers' attitudes toward the use of AI in mass communication education. It is guided by the following research question: Do teachers hold positive attitudes toward using AI in mass communication education?

II. Methods

Search Strategy and Study Selection

A systematic search strategy was employed to identify studies relevant to teachers' attitudes toward the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in mass communication education, drawing on both discipline-specific evidence and transferable findings from broader educational contexts.

The search process consisted of 21 targeted keyword searches and one citation-graph search. Keyword searches were organized around three core concepts: (1) teachers and educators, (2) artificial intelligence and AI-based technologies, and (3) mass communication education, operationalized through terms spanning communication, journalism, media studies, advertising, public relations, and related disciplines, supplemented by broader educational terms to capture transferable evidence on teachers' perceptions of AI. The citation-graph search complemented this by tracing citation links from 50 seed papers identified as particularly relevant to the topic, to surface additional publications that keyword searching alone might miss.

Together, the 21 keyword searches and the citation-graph search retrieved approximately 8.9 million records from the searchable corpus, a figure reflecting the overall pool returned by the search system rather than records manually screened. Automated relevance and quality filtering, together with deduplication, reduced this pool to approximately 3,300 potentially eligible papers, which were then ranked by relevance to the review question. The 100 highest-ranked papers were retained for final analysis, prioritizing studies with direct evidence on teachers' attitudes, perceptions, acceptance, or willingness to use AI, with particular attention to mass communication and related communication disciplines, while retaining broader-education studies where their findings offered transferable insight.

Study Selection Criteria

Studies were included when they addressed educators' attitudes, perceptions, acceptance, experiences, or intentions regarding the educational use of AI, with priority given to teachers or instructors in higher education within mass-communication-related disciplines; studies from other educational fields were included only when they meaningfully informed interpretation within this context.

Studies were excluded when they focused exclusively on students' attitudes toward AI, examined AI technologies without reporting educators' perspectives, addressed purely technical aspects of AI development, or lacked sufficient information to evaluate relevance to the review question. Duplicate publications were also excluded.

Data Synthesis

The included studies were synthesized according to the direction and content of teachers' reported attitudes toward AI, categorized as positive, mixed/conditional, or negative. Positive attitudes reflected favorable perceptions, acceptance, perceived usefulness, or willingness to use AI in teaching. Mixed or conditional attitudes reflected favorable perceptions coexisting with substantial reservations, or attitudes contingent on conditions such as institutional support, AI competence, ethical safeguards, or the nature of the pedagogical task. Negative attitudes reflected predominantly unfavorable evaluations, resistance, or unwillingness to adopt AI.

Beyond overall direction, recurring reasons underlying these evaluations were identified, including perceived pedagogical usefulness, efficiency, ease of use, concerns about academic integrity, accuracy and reliability, ethical issues, professional roles, and institutional readiness, and compared across mass-communication-related and broader educational literature to assess whether the evidence supported an overall positive orientation toward AI use in mass communication education.

III. Result

Perceived Benefits and Drivers of Adoption

Teachers across the corpus consistently recognize AI's capacity to reduce workload, automate routine tasks, and enhance instructional efficiency. AI assists teachers in identifying student needs, monitoring progress, and providing immediate feedback, which reduces their workload and helps them focus on critical instructional issues (Celik et al., 2022). A 2023 survey of 1,002 K-12 teachers in the United States found that 51% had used ChatGPT, with 73% indicating it could help students learn more and 77% saying it could help them grow as teachers (Kamalov et al., 2023). Educators use AI for lesson planning, generating creative ideas for classes, and building background knowledge (Kamalov et al., 2023).

In communication-specific contexts, AI tools such as ChatGPT can simulate real-world marketing environments, offering students practical experience in strategic decision-making and trend prediction (Dong, 2024). Business communication instructors share responsibility for educating students about AI uses in the workplace, and the same pedagogical and ethical considerations applied to other writing tools can be extended to AI (Getchell et al., 2022). Teachers who acquired more knowledge about AI and used the tools in the classroom showed increased confidence and willingness to adopt them (Brandão et al., 2024).

The Technology Acceptance Model and UTAUT frameworks consistently identify perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use as the strongest predictors of teachers' willingness to implement AI (Krishna et al., 2026; Viernes & Palapuz, 2025). Teachers who view AI as a valuable resource are more likely to integrate it into their teaching practice, while those with a negative attitude resist adoption even when they acknowledge its usefulness (Viernes & Palapuz, 2025).

Concerns, Barriers, and Resistance

Despite recognizing benefits, teachers express substantial concerns that temper their enthusiasm. Academic integrity is the most frequently cited worry, with ChatGPT's human-like answers raising concerns about plagiarism, cheating, and the erosion of independent learning (Akpan et al., 2025; Naweed-e-Sehar, 2024). Teachers believe AI can be harmful when students become overreliant, reducing critical thinking and exploration (Agarwal et al., 2021). In mass communication education specifically, educators express concerns about uncontrolled AI use in university classrooms and the challenge of promoting academic integrity (Poémape-Bustamante & Siguas-Flores, 2025).

Table 1. Teacher concern dimensions and supporting evidence

Concern Dimension	Evidence From Literature	Citations
Academic integrity	Plagiarism, cheating, uncontrolled student use	(Akpan et al., 2025; Naweed-e-Sehar, 2024; Poémape-Bustamante & Siguas-Flores, 2025)
Critical thinking erosion	Overreliance reduces analytical skills	(Agarwal et al., 2021; Yavich, 2025)
Professional identity	Fear of role displacement and autonomy loss	(Gupta et al., 2024; Nur Fitria, 2023; Wang, 2025)
Data privacy and bias	Algorithmic bias, privacy violations, misinformation	(Davar et al., 2025; Gupta et al., 2024)
Insufficient training	Lack of AI literacy, fragmented PD programs	(Husna & Zakiah, 2025; Shardey et al., 2025)

Ethical and privacy concerns extend beyond academic integrity to encompass data security, algorithmic bias, and the potential for AI to reinforce existing social inequalities (Davar et al., 2025; Gupta et al., 2024). Teachers' attitudes toward AI vary significantly based on their level of training in digital platforms, with insufficient training producing resistance and concerns about diminished personal interaction (Ocupa Cabrera &

Meneses La Riva, 2025). Professional development programs are frequently described as fragmented, inequitable, and overly focused on short-term technical training rather than sustained pedagogical transformation (Shardey et al., 2025).

Discipline-Specific Attitudes in Communication Education

Within mass communication and related fields, the literature reveals a distinctive attitude profile shaped by the applied, industry-aligned nature of the discipline. Marketing communications education research explicitly notes that AI usage is most prevalent in STEM disciplines, with relatively fewer studies examining its implications for communication fields (Dong, 2024). Business communication pedagogy is described as being in its earliest stages of addressing how AI will affect professional communication practice (Getchell et al., 2022).

Teachers in communication fields recognize that AI can simulate real-world marketing environments and prepare students for an evolving industry, but they also play an essential role in monitoring students' AI usage to ensure learning quality (Dong, 2024). The findings emphasize the importance of equipping both educators and students with AI competencies specific to the communication profession (Dong, 2024). In journalism and news media contexts, AI adoption has been driven primarily by tech-company funding, which limits the potential of AI in the news industry to a small number of players, a structural concern that extends to how journalism educators frame AI's role (de-Lima-Santos & Ceron, 2021).

Teacher attitudes also vary by subject area, with STEM teachers holding different views than humanities teachers due to differential technology exposure and topical relevance (Wang, 2025). This variation implies that communication educators, positioned between humanities and applied professional fields, may exhibit a unique attitude profile not fully captured by general education research.

IV. Discussion

The corpus reveals a field in productive tension. Teachers' attitudes toward AI in education, and mass communication education specifically, are best characterized as cautiously optimistic with significant reservations. The strongest and most replicated finding is that perceived usefulness drives adoption intentions, consistent across TAM and UTAUT frameworks applied in multiple contexts (Krishna et al., 2026; Viernes & Palapuz, 2025). This finding is robust because it draws on well-established technology acceptance theory and has been replicated across diverse educational settings, from K-12 to higher education and across multiple countries.

However, the evidence base for mass communication education specifically is notably weaker than for general education or STEM fields. Dong's review explicitly identifies this gap, noting that while AI's role in engineering and computer science is well-studied, its impact on marketing communications education "remains underexplored" (Dong, 2024). Getchell et al. similarly characterize business communication pedagogy as being in "the very early stages" of addressing AI (Getchell et al., 2022). This limits the generalizability of attitude findings to the communication education context, as most attitude data come from teachers in other disciplines.

A critical limitation across the corpus is the predominance of review-of-review designs, many papers synthesize existing reviews rather than reporting primary empirical data on teacher attitudes. Studies that do report primary data, such as the Walton Family Foundation survey cited by Kamalov et al., provide valuable snapshots but lack longitudinal design (Kamalov et al., 2023). The absence of validated, discipline-specific attitude scales for communication educators further constrains the field; Wang's review of AI attitude scales found only one teacher-specific scale among seven identified instruments, and none were designed for communication disciplines (Wang, 2025).

The corpus also underrepresents teachers from developing countries and non-Western educational contexts, though Ahmed's comparative analysis of Australia and Pakistan illustrates how cultural factors shape AI adoption attitudes, with Pakistani teachers expressing greater skepticism due to cultural liberalism, religious hesitations, and fear of the unknown (Ahmed, 2025). This gap matters because mass communication education is inherently global, and attitudes toward AI-mediated communication tools will vary with cultural context.

V. Conclusion

This synthesis of 100 review papers reveals that teachers' attitudes toward AI in education, and mass communication education in particular, are shaped by a dynamic interplay of perceived utility, ethical concern, professional identity, and institutional readiness. The dominant theoretical frameworks (TAM, UTAUT) consistently identify perceived usefulness as the primary adoption driver, while academic integrity, insufficient training, and fears about professional displacement serve as the principal barriers. For mass communication education specifically, the evidence base remains nascent: educators recognize AI's potential to simulate real-world communication environments and prepare students for an AI-transformed industry, but discipline-specific attitude research is underdeveloped compared to STEM fields.

The most striking gap is the near-absence of empirical attitude studies focused specifically on mass communication educators, with only Dong's review of marketing communications and Getchell et al.'s business communication analysis directly addressing the field (Dong, 2024; Getchell et al., 2022). Validated attitude scales designed for communication disciplines do not exist, and longitudinal studies tracking how teacher attitudes evolve with sustained AI exposure are absent across the entire corpus (Wang, 2025).

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